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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 005694

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: IRAQ, TURKEY AND A NEW UNSC RESOLUTION: PASSAGE
CAN ONLY HELP, BUT WON'T ELIMINATE ALL OF TURKEY'S CONCERNS

REF: STATE 256273

Classified by DCM Robert S. Deutsch. Reasons 1.5 B and D.

11. (C) The passage of a new UNSC resolution on Iraq authorizing a UN-mandated MNF would provide useful cover for GOT officials with the Turkish Parliament if/when the GOT seeks Parliament's approval for a Turkish troop contribution. Significantly, President Sezer, the loudest voice insisting on "international legitimacy," might be silenced by such a resolution, as might a few, but not all, of the CHP opposition, which continues to object to Turkish participation. However, a Turkish deployment is likely to remain unpopular among the Turkish press and a public that does not want Turkish troops to be at risk "doing a favor" for the US in Iraq. Turks have qualms about the prospects of fighting fellow Muslims and of taking casualties in parts of Iraq where Turkey's direct interests have long been portrayed as peripheral. Turks remain focused on the tensions between Iraqi Turkmen and Kurds, and on the PKK/KADEK presence, in northern Iraq. So long as those issues remain hot here, a Turkish deployment away from the north will be controversial among the press and public, regardless of whether there is a UN resolution backing it. To the extent that a resolution attracts other contributors, that too will help the GOT get to yes.

12. (C) Bottom Line: Overall, in the effort to get a Turkish contribution, a new UNSCR helps. But on its own, it will not assure us of winning the Turks over. On the down side, a protracted UN debate may well delay a Turkish decision, as the Turks are likely to wait and see whether the UN process succeeds before taking the issue to Parliament. Should we fail to secure a new resolution, having tried but failed will add ammunition to those who oppose a Turkish contribution, making it that much harder to get the Turks on board. Whichever way it goes, Turkey will be watching closely.

13. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.
EDELMAN